

BOARD FOR PROFESSIONAL SOIL SCIENTISTS AND WETLAND PROFESSIONALS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING PROFESSIONAL SOIL SCIENTIST CERTIFICATION

How do I contact the Board office?

You may reach the Board office by phone at 804-367-8512, by fax at 804-367-2475, or by e-mail at soilscientist@dpor.virginia.gov. Additionally, if you have information that you would like to mail to the Board, please send it to:

Board for Professional Soil Scientists and Wetland Professionals
Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation
3600 West Broad St.
Richmond, VA 23230-4917

When I call the Board office, will I be able to speak directly with a Board member?

No. The Board members do not work in the Board office. The Board members are practicing professionals with various businesses in Virginia. They come into the Board offices for Board meetings and hearings, but are not here on a daily basis. The Board staff is here for you to contact with any questions you may have; contacting Board members directly is not appropriate. The Board office staff can answer your questions and are trained to process all information that comes into the Board office.

What are the qualifications for certification?

The Board for Professional Soil Scientists and Wetland Professionals Regulations governing the certification of professional soil scientists states that applicants for certification shall meet the education, eligibility, experience and examination requirements specified in Chapter 22 of Title 54.1 of the Code of Virginia. The Code of Virginia states that in order to be certified as a professional soil scientist, an applicant shall achieve a score acceptable to the Board on an examination in the principles and practice of soil evaluation and satisfy one of the following criteria:

1. Hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution of higher education in a soils curriculum which has been approved by the Board and have at least four years of experience in soil evaluation, the quality of which demonstrates to the Board that the applicant is competent to practice as a professional soil scientist; or

2. Hold a bachelor's degree in one of the natural sciences and have at least five years of experience in soil evaluation, the quality of which demonstrates to the Board that the applicant is competent to practice as a professional soil scientist; or
3. Have a record of at least eight years of experience in soil evaluation, the quality of which demonstrates to the Board that the applicant is competent to practice as a professional soil scientist; or
4. Have at least four years of experience in soil science research or as a teacher of soils curriculum in an accredited institution of higher education which offers an approved four-year program in soils and at least two years of soil evaluation experience, the quality of which demonstrates to the Board that the applicant is competent to practice as a professional soil scientist.

I am certified or licensed in another state and wish to get certified in Virginia. Can I apply through reciprocity?

Yes. The Board for Professional Soil Scientists and Wetland Professionals Regulations governing the certification of professional soil scientists provides for application through reciprocity. Any person certified, registered or licensed as a soil scientist in any jurisdiction of the United States may be granted a Virginia certificate without written examination, provided that the applicant holds an unexpired certificate or its equivalent issued to him on the basis of equivalent requirements for certification in Virginia, by a regulatory body of another state, territory or possession of the United States and is not the subject of any disciplinary proceeding before such regulatory body which could result in the suspension or revocation of his certificate, and such other regulatory body recognizes the certificates issued by this board.

I am certified in Virginia. I am applying for certification or licensure in another state, but they are requesting verification of my Virginia certification. What do I need to do?

Please send a check for \$25 made payable to the Treasurer of Virginia, along with a written request for a letter of certification. State whether the certification should be sent to you or directly to the other state board.

I need to renew my certification, but I have not yet received my renewal form. What do I need to do?

Send in the renewal fee (make checks payable to the Treasurer of Virginia) along with a note indicating what the payment is for and include your certification number. If you have had a change of address, include your new address on the note. Mail this information to the Board for Professional Soil Scientists and Wetland Professionals, Department of Professional & Occupational Regulation, 3600 West Broad Street, Richmond, VA 23230-4917. You CANNOT represent yourself as a Virginia certified professional soil scientists if you are not currently certified by the Board.

My renewal payment was one day late and I have always paid on time. Can you waive the late renewal fee?

No. The Board's regulations permit a 30 day grace period in which a license may be renewed without penalty; therefore, your payment is actually 31 days late. Staff cannot waive the fee. Regulation 18 VAC 145-20-130 states that if the requirements for renewal of a certificate, including receipt of the fee by the board, are not complete within 30 days of the expiration date, a reinstatement is required.

If I did not renew my certificate on time because I did not receive my renewal card, do I still have to pay a late fee or reinstate my certificate?

Yes. Regulation 18 VAC 145-20-130 states that failure to receive the renewal notice does not relieve the certificate holder of the obligation to renew.

Does the Board office use the date of receipt or the postmark date to determine whether or not an application or renewal was received on time?

The date the application or renewal was *received* in the agency determines whether it is on time, *not the postmark date*. If the renewal fee is received after the due date, you will be required to pay the reinstatement fee.

My address has changed. What do I need to do to notify the Board?

All address changes must be submitted in writing to the Board office. This may be via mail, electronic mail, or fax. When providing a post office box as the mailing address, it must be accompanied by the physical address.

My name has changed. What do I need to do to notify the Board?

All name changes must be received by the Board in writing. You must submit a copy of a marriage certificate, divorce decree, court order, or other documentation which verifies the name change.

This information is meant to provide general information regarding the Board's regulations; however, it should not be relied on exclusively to determine the Board's requirements. Please refer to the Board's regulations and/or contact the Board office for more information.